

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### MERILLAT CORPORATION

#### Nevada Management Assistance Partnership

#### Merillat Reduces Employee Turnover by 22 Percent

##### Client Profile:

Merillat Corporation, headquartered in Adrian, Michigan, has been providing quality cabinetry since 1946. The company has 11 manufacturing plants and over 4,200 employees. There are 400 people employed at the Las Vegas, Nevada, plant.

##### Situation:

Merillat Production facilities operate 24 hours per day 7 days a week, while experiencing a daily increase in demand for custom-quality kitchen cabinets used in new and refurbished home construction. Operating around the clock requires an unusual and flexible workforce. Production lines are semi-automated which requires skilled and dedicated employees who are trained both on the job and classroom. New employees hired through personnel agencies were at a disadvantage to understand the typical requirements of the workplace. As a result, the employee turnover rate was higher than normal. The company contacted the Nevada Management Assistance Partnership (MAP, a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

##### Solution:

MAP conducted a Lean manufacturing training program, attended by Merillat team leaders. At the end of the training day, MAP trainers asked Merillat team members how Lean principles would help in their workplace. The team leaders expressed concern about production losses (time wasted) due to their time spent to train new employees. It was said that newly trained employees didn't understand the job requirements before joining the company. With this information, Jim Abbinett, HR Manager, turned to MAP to help solve the problem of orienting potential employees in the hiring process. It was decided to produce a New Employee Orientation Video that could be used by Merillat and other hiring firms during the Interviewing process.

##### Results:

- \* Developed New Employee Orientation Video.
- \* Improved job satisfaction.
- \* Reduced employee turnover by 22 percent.

##### Testimonial:

"This is a great result so far, and we expect to continually improve the perception of the company and job satisfaction of all new hires."

Jim Abbinett, Human Resources Manager